

## Sunday School

### PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

August 1, 1909. Acts 18:1-11.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—John 16:33.

#### DAILY HOME READINGS.

M.—Acts 18:1-11. T.—Acts 18:12-22.  
W.—1 Cor. 9:13-23. Th.—2 Cor. 12:10-19.  
F.—1 Cor. 4:1-16. S.—Jer. 1:7-19.  
S.—John 16:25-23.

#### SHORTER CATECHISM.

Q. 66. What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.

#### TOPICAL OUTLINE.

##### The Founding of the Corinthian Church—

Paul's home with Aquila and Priscilla, vs. 1-3.

Work in the synagogue and the house of Justus, vs. 4-6.

A notable convert and a cheering vision, vs. 7-11.

#### LESSON COMMENT.

How long Paul remained in Athens we do not know. It is probable that he waited until Timothy came from Berea and then sent him to visit and strengthen the Church at Thessalonica. We believe that he met with discouragement at Athens and decided to come to Corinth as offering greater opportunities for the spread of the Gospel.

In this city were also large numbers of Jews who had been driven from Rome by a decree of Claudius and who had been attracted to Corinth by the opportunities for trade.

Among these Jews who had been expelled from Rome and now resided in Corinth were Aquila and Priscilla, two natives of Pontus, a province of Asia Minor. These were people probably of wealth and were manufacturers of tents, for which there was great demand in those times. They are afterwards found at Ephesus and then at Rome.

Paul, being of the same trade, attaches himself to them. We are not to infer that these people were already Christians. Although he had a right to live by the Gospel, he knew of the criticism to which he would be subjected by his enemies, and he preferred to labor with his hands. This labor brought him into close relations with Aquila and Priscilla, and they were converted to the faith of Jesus Christ. It also gained him the acquaintance of those who came into the factory on business. Paul combined diligent labor in the common things of life with an intense zeal for the Gospel, and made his work the means to gain entrance into the hearts of those whom he otherwise would not have reached. The merchants who were about to take long journeys into all parts of the earth and came to buy tents were made acquainted with Jesus Christ and carried his name to places which Paul never saw. The sailors who came for sails took away also the remembrance of the burning words of the little tent-maker and carried the light of Jesus to distant shores.

Not only did he labor six days, but upon the Sabbath he embraced the opportunity of reasoning in the synagogue and persuading the Jews and Greeks.

At this time Silas and Timothy brought news of the condition of the churches in Macedonia. It was at this time that Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Thessalonians.

Being "pressed in the spirit," Paul redoubled his labors among the Jews, and here we have a hint of the opposition which he ever encountered among this people. Paul is, no doubt, referring to this opposition when he writes to the Thessalonians of those who "please not God and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved."

With the symbolical act of shaking the dust from his garment he separates himself from the synagogue and makes the home of Justus the place of assembly and worship. Justus

was a proselyte and could receive both Hebrews and Gentiles into his house. This house was next to the synagogue, and the continued growth of the Christian Church, which was witnessed by the Jews who worshipped next door, was no doubt one of the causes which stirred their antagonism and enmity.

Among those who withdrew from the synagogue and joined the Christian Church were Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and all his house. Others were Epenetus, who seems to have been the earliest Christian convert (Rom. 16:5), and the household of Stephanus (Rom. 16:15), and Gaius, with whom he stayed during his second visit to Corinth. Also, "many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized." So important was the accession of Crispus, Gaius and Stephanus that Paul departed from his usual practice and baptized them with his own hand (1 Cor. 14:16). From 1 Cor., first chapter, we gather that these Corinthians were mostly of the lower or middle classes.

The opposition which he encountered, aggravated, perhaps, by the withdrawal of Crispus from the synagogue, seems to have depressed Paul, and God strengthened his spirit by a vision, giving him the assurance of the Lord's presence, a promise of safety and abundant success. These promises were all fulfilled, because Paul had a safe and continued residence in the city for about eighteen months and left a strong and vigorous church.

About this time Gallio was made pro-consul of the province of Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital. Gallio, whose original name was Annaeus Novatus, was the brother of Annaeus Seneca, the philosopher. In the writings of Seneca we find allusions to Gallio's stay in Achaia, also a description of his character. Seneca speaks of him with singular affection: "not only as a man of integrity and honesty, but as one who won universal regard by his amiable temper and popular manners."

The Jews, wishing to take advantage of the presence of the new governor, thought that if they accused Paul of introducing a new religion, or interfering with their own religious laws, which were protected by Rome, that they would secure a conviction or perhaps would be allowed to punish him themselves. But, although they "set on him to hurt him," God was with him.

Gallio would not even hear the defense of Paul, but pronounced a decided judgment, and one that must have carried the Jews off their feet; at any rate, it produced the utmost rage and disappointment among them. "His answer was that of a man who knew the limits of his office and felt that he had no time to waste on the religious technicalities of the Jews."

The Greeks had been bystanders, waiting to hear the result and to learn something of the character of the new governor. They had no love for the Jews and were ready to take sides with Paul. When they saw that Gallio could not be manipulated by the Jews, but drove them from the judgment seat, they rushed upon Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in the presence of the governor. Gallio did not interfere, thinking, perhaps, that it was a good lesson for the Jews.

It is possible that this Sosthenes was the "brother" who joined with Paul in his salutation to the Church at Corinth when Paul later wrote them his first epistle. (1 Cor. 1:1.)

These events made Paul's position the more secure in Corinth, and he tarried there yet a good while and then took his leave of the brethren and sailed thence into Syria, having as his companion Priscilla and Aquila. It was probably Paul's desire to attend one of the feasts at Jerusalem. At Cenchrae Aquila, who had taken a vow of some character and had let his hair grow long as a sign of that vow, laid aside the tokens of the vow and had his hair cut.

From Cenchrae, the port of Corinth, they sailed to Ephesus. Here his two companions left him, and, while the ship was unloading and taking on new cargo, Paul uses the time in visiting the synagogue and reasoning with the Jews. They became interested in his message and begged him to remain; but he wished to keep the feast at Jerusalem and promised them that he would come again, which he did on his third missionary tour.